6: Sauer--131 [3] G-5 (1785-94) 1802 Yakut
116, 284, 294

"The thread with which they sew their clothes is made of the sinews from the legs of the horse, deer, or elk."

233 say that they die from it. The castration is performed in the follow-
492 ing way: the natives "throw" the reindeer, two of them hold the reindeer by the legs, and one kneels down and chews the buck's testicles until they are destroyed.

[283] For catching the reindeer the natives use the "maam' t"--a rope which may be as long as 160 meters and which is plaited out for four or five thin straps. On one end of the maam' t there is a cross-piece made of a little stick--the karaka, or 'knot'--which is passed through both openings in a bone plate--the "pietelke." Before catching a reindeer with the maam' t the natives wind it around their left elbow, holding part of the rope--the part which does not have the loop formed by means of the "pietelke"--in their left hand; they take the other part of the rope in their right hand and, swinging it around, they throw it at the head of the reindeer they have chosen. The noose with the bone plate falls over the horns and tightens. Sometimes two men throw the maam' t at one reindeer at the same time from opposite sides of him. This method of catching the reindeer is called mэkkytterer (to compel to fight). Often in winter and in summer at the time of the gnats, when the reindeer cluster together in a bunch, several men circle the herd with outstretched maam' t and act as a fence, which allows the other persons to go into the midst of the herd and catch reindeer with their bare hands. This method of catching reindeer is called eritterer (to compel to go around).

The Dolgan attain amazing skill in throwing the maam' t; they start practicing it when they are very young, throwing the maam' t over the horns of slain reindeer.

233 Once the animals have been caught the natives want to lead them
284 to the place where they are to be harnessed or have a load put on them, and in order to do this they "string" the reindeer--five or six, and even more, at a time on one maam' t, tying them by means of dull knots called ile baaj'' (simple binding) or iliinnen sieter baaj'' (ribbon for leading by the bridle) [Figure 2g]. These knots have the drawback that they can tighten up and choke the reindeer, and for this reason they are only used for leading the reindeer over short distances. In order to lead reindeer by the same method over longer distances special knots that do not tighten up are used; they are called tuomtuu tarder (the binding which is quickly undone) [Figure 2f].

In addition, they use still other knots for tying one reindeer: a) er kihi baaj''ta (the male binding) and b) çaktar baaj''ta (the female

233 binding) [Figure 2h-i]. A man never uses a female knot to tie a
284 reindeer, for he would be laughed at if he did. They tie the rein-
[412] deer to trees or bushes; in those places where there are no trees or bushes--for example, on the hilltops--the reindeer are tied to special wooden pegs--the kojnos--about forty or fifty centimeters in length, which are stuck into the ground and which at the same time serve as digging sticks for unearthing edible roots [Fig. 2e].

233 In summer the Dolgan ride reindeer, and only their "twigs"
492 (boats) are carried on special sledges with two crossbars; in winter, however, they ride on sleds exclusively. [189] According to the stories, in ancient times they rode only reindeer both summer and winter and borrowed the sledge gear later from the Tavgi.

The reindeer harness is in reality not as simple as it would appear at first glance; and incidentally, in all the Russian ethnographic literature we do not have anything like a complete description of it. If someone who knew nothing of the ways of harnessing reindeer were to take it into his head to hitch one up [Fig. 3] according to the descriptions found in the available literature, he would find out that he was quite helpless. Any ethnographic description can be completely scientific only if by following it one could completely and precisely duplicate the described event or object, and it is our task to strive toward this end with all possible efforts. To give a detailed description of the Dolgan winter reindeer harness means to give a description of the harness which is the most widespread at the present time in the north, starting from Scandinavia and extending to the eastern tip of Asia, excluding the Paleo-Asiatics. Such insignificant variations among the separate peoples who live in the aforementioned territory as, for example, the fact that the Nenets and the Tavgi steer from the left side while the Dolgan steer from the right side, and other minor details, do not change the general construction of the summer and winter harnesses of the reindeer.

The bast' ŋa--the halter used for riding a reindeer [Fig. 2k] consists of a strap sewn together in the form of a circle and placed on the forehead; fastened to its sides are two small straps made of reindeer hide [Fig. 2e-m] by means of which the halter is fastened at the back of the head; to the lower part is sewn a strap called njuogu--a small rein for guiding the reindeer [Fig. 2n]. The halters
[531] of female reindeer, the reindeer used as pack animals, and the "shaytan'i" riding reindeer (1) have the part over the forehead

1. "Shaytan'i" riding reindeer are reindeer on which are

284 493 Although in the first three types of sleds the predominant means of holding the parts together is wooden nails, which have the advantage of not becoming fragile, as do iron nails in the intense cold, in the last two types all the separate parts are held together by means of straps.

233 492 493 To the front part of the setii s'rga, the turku, and the turkucaaŋk' is fastened a thick shaft-bow made of rose willow--the kab'rga, or "ram" ["male sheep"--Translator]. However, just as among the northern Yakut, among the Dolgan this does not serve as something to tie the rein to; the rein is passed through pulleys which are fastened directly to the crosspiece of the sled, and the rein passes [197] under the ram. This was explained as being due to the fact that if the reins are allowed to pass over the top of the ram they are high enough up in the air to rub sores on the legs of the reindeer, whereas the ram keeps the reins down low all the time; but such an explaination is not convincing to me personally. Thus, we see that the ram, having lost its main function as the shaft-bow by which the sled was pulled, among the Dolgan serves only as a "bumper" to prevent the sleds from breaking when they collide with trees. [Fig. 14] In the cargo harness, the rein is sometimes passed both above and below the ram, so that in case the pulley breaks the sled will not have to stop, since the reindeer can pull it by the ram.

233 284 492 A characteristic peculiarity of the winter harness for reindeer is the absence of knots, which are replaced by wooden buckles; these are quite convenient in severe cold, when the fingers become frostbitten after being exposed for a moment, and for this reason it is important that the shortest possible time be spent in harnessing up the team. If it should be necessary to tie knots in the reins, for example, the natives make knots which can be quickly untied [Fig. 9L]. [Fig. 15].

233 492 When the natives are riding in winter they urge the reindeer on with a stick about four meters long; they poke the end of the stick into the hind quarters of the reindeer, since, on account of its thick hair, the reindeer is completely insensitive to other methods of prodding. This stick--the kyrej, or "khorey" in Russian [Fig. 9h]--has on its top end a small bone circle to prevent the reindeer being pierced by the stick. On the lower end of the "khorey" is fixed an iron tip of a spear--the ynyy--with a blunt point [Fig. 9ee]. With this the front rider tests the thickness of the ice on rivers in the autumn to see whether the caravan can cross over them or not. This tip also enables the natives to poke the stick upright in the snow when

54: Popov--29 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan

[187]

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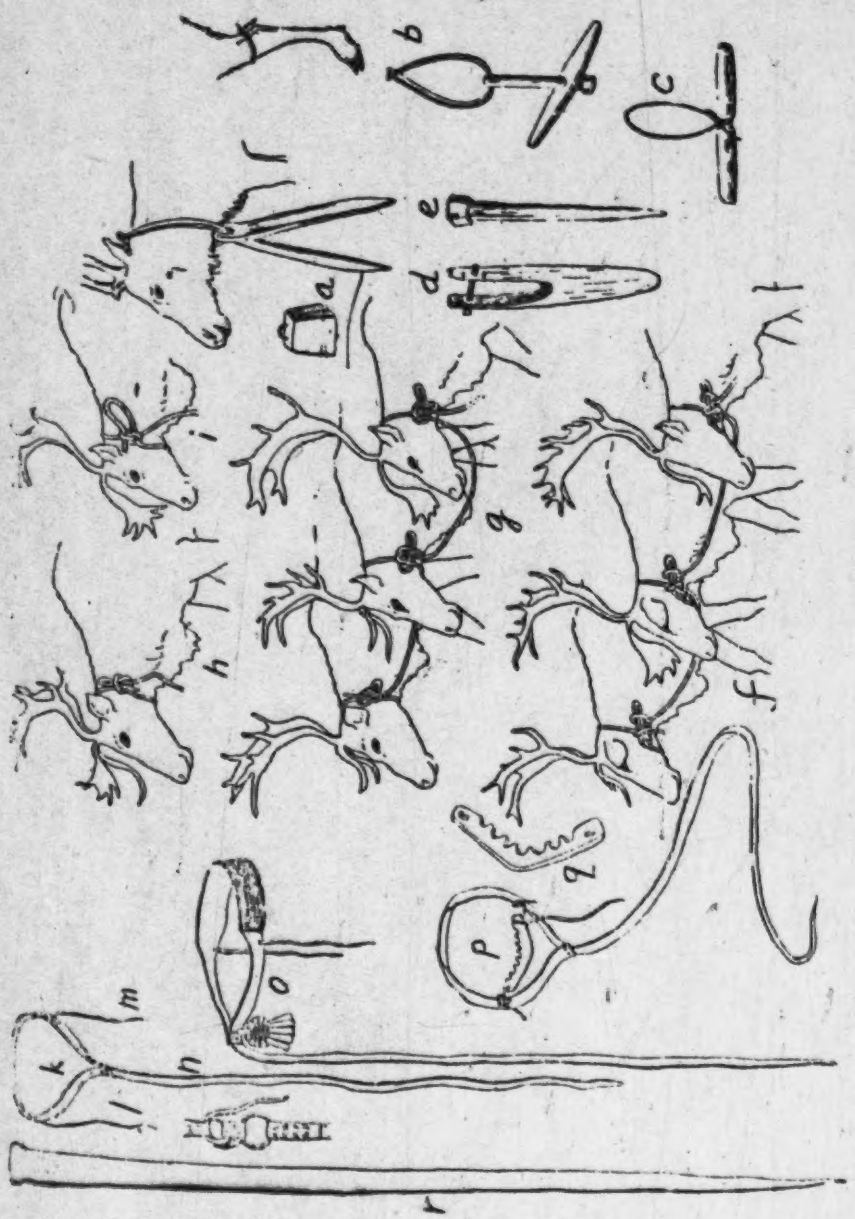

Fig. 2

Figure 2 [187]

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492 a, b, c -- bell fastened to the neck of a reindeer, and wooden hobbles; upper right -- hind leg of a reindeer, tied with a cord

d -- Reindeer leg hobble

e -- stick to which reindeer are tied

f -- quickly loosening knot

g -- knot for leading reindeer by a bridle

h -- male knot

i -- female knot

k -- halter for a male riding reindeer

l, m -- knots of the halter

o -- halter of a female riding reindeer

p -- halter with a small bone comb

q -- small bone comb

r -- reindeer saddle girth; at the side is shown the method of fastening the girth.

54: Popov--36 E-3 (no date) 1935 Yakut
Dolgan
[facing p. 192]

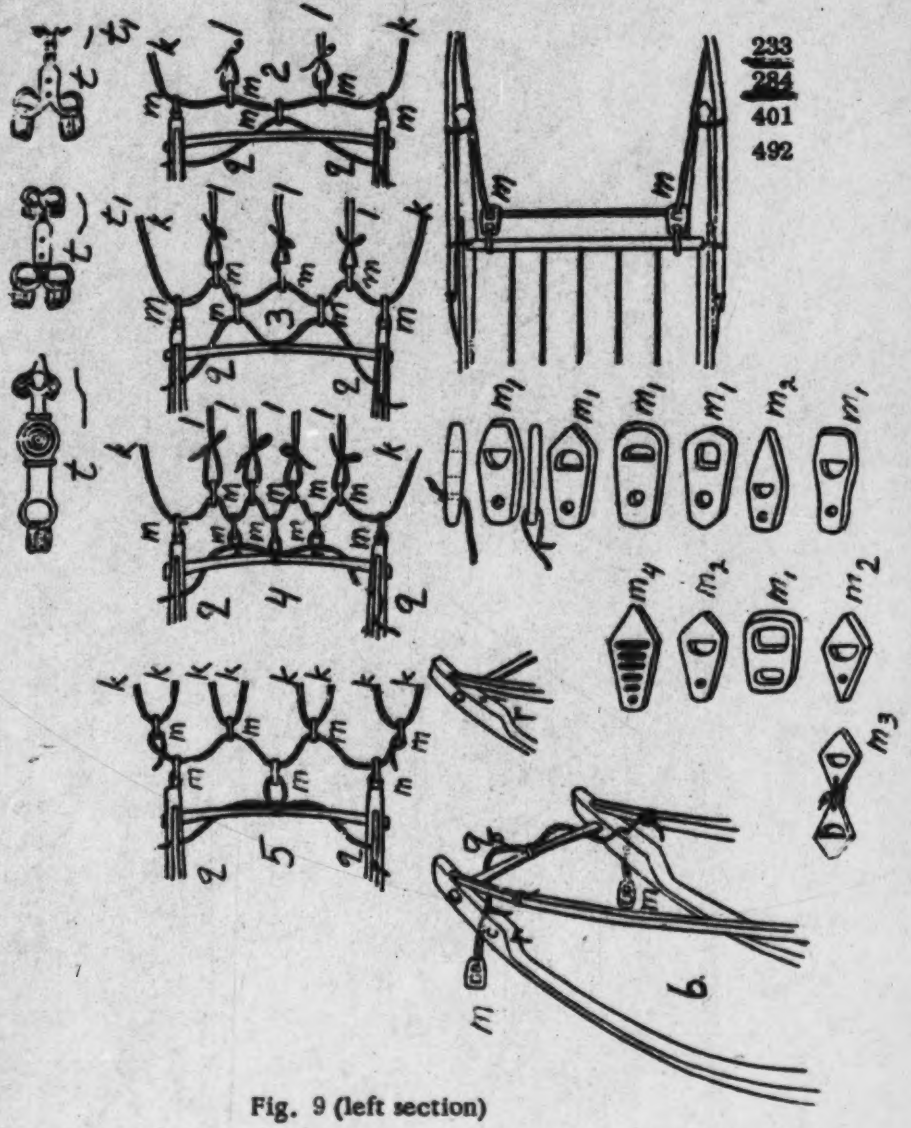

Fig. 9 (left section)

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Figure 9

A -- light harness
c -- lead reindeer
d -- outrunner reindeer
f -- halter on the lead reindeer
f -- halter on the outrunner reindeer
g -- thongs connecting the reindeer
h -- ala-straps
i -- thongs holding the ala-straps in place
i_1 -- loops to which are tied the thongs which connect the reindeer
j -- girth
k -- main rein
l -- outrunner reins
m -- pulleys for the reins
m_1 -- cargo pulley
m_2 -- pulleys for light sleds
m_3 -- fastening together of two pulleys in the absence of one pulley with two broad openings
m_4 -- pulley with emergency openings in case of breakage
n -- neckcord for a cargo reindeer
o -- rein for a cargo sled
p -- rose-willow arch
q -- straps to which are tied the side pulleys and the supplementary pulleys of the light sled
c -- reins
b_1 -- "Khorey" (h--small bone circle; aa--strap headband; ee--iron spear)
r -- openings in the ends of the runners for the straps of the side pulleys and the supplementary pulleys.
s -- bone hook for supporting the rein
t -- metal hooks for supporting the reins
t_1 -- side view of the hooks

B -- Cargo harness
D -- Detail of the Yurak harness
u -- loop to which is attached the cord from the girth

233 v -- cord running from the girth
284 ff -- end of the rein with a wooden buckle, and with a
401 loop instead of a buckle
492

Detail of the Dolgan harness

bb, z, cc -- iron hooks and buckles through which is passed the end of the rein

y -- iron ring

w -- thongs by means of which the iron ring is fastened to the girth

Ways of arranging the pulleys

1 -- with three reindeer

2 -- with four reindeer

3 -- with five reindeer

4 -- with six reindeer

5 -- with eight reindeer

6 -- front end of a light sled with side pulleys